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HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS: COMPREHENSIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF AND FOLLOW-UP TO THE VIENNA DECLARATION AND PROGRAMME OF ACTION

Report of the Third Committee (Part V)*

Rapporteur: Mr. Ahmed Yousif MOHAMED (Sudan)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its 3rd plenary meeting, on 22 September 1995, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its fiftieth session the item entitled "Human rights questions: Comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action" and to allocate it to the Third Committee.

2. The Committee considered the item jointly with sub-items 112 (a), (b), (c) and (e), at its 35th and 38th to 53rd meetings, on 21, 24 and 27 to 30 November and 1, 4, 6, 8 and 11 December 1995. An account of the Committee's discussion is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.3/50/SR.35 and 38-53).

3. For the documents before the Committee under this item, see document A/50/635.

4. At the 38th meeting, on 24 November, the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, Centre for Human Rights, made an introductory statement (see A/C.3/50/SR.38).

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* The report of the Committee on agenda item 112 will be issued in six parts under the symbol A/50/635 and Add.1-5.

II. CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTION A/C.3/50/L.50

5. At the 52nd meeting, on 8 December, the representative of Austria, on behalf of Albania, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Kazakstan, Kenya, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Peru, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Slovakia, Slovenia, the Solomon Islands, Spain, Suriname, Sweden, Turkey, Ukraine, Venezuela and Zambia, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action" (A/C.3/50/L.50). Subsequently, Afghanistan, Barbados, Cameroon, Canada, Congo, Eritrea, Guatemala, India, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritius, Nepal, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Panama, the Philippines, Samoa, Sri Lanka, Swaziland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

6. In introducing the draft resolution, the representative of Austria reversed it as follows:

(a) Operative paragraph 12 was moved up and inserted after the sixth preambular paragraph;

(b) In operative paragraph 5, second line, the word "all" was inserted after the words "realization of".

7. At its 53rd meeting, on 11 December, the Committee adopted corrected draft resolution A/C.3/50/L.50 as orally revised, without a vote (see para. 8).

III. RECOMMENDATION OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE

8. The Third Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 48/121 of 20 December 1993, in which it endorsed the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, 1/ adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights, held at Vienna in June 1993, as well as its

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1/ A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III.

resolution 49/208 of 23 December 1994 on the comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action,

Recalling also Commission on Human Rights resolution 1994/95 of 9 March 1994, 2/ in which the Commission decided to review annually the progress towards the full implementation of the recommendations contained in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action,

Reaffirming the view of the Conference that the promotion and protection of human rights is a matter of priority for the international community,

Considering that the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms is one of the basic purposes of the Charter of the United Nations and one of the main priorities of the Organization,

Recognizing the urgency of eliminating denials and violations of human rights, as expressed in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action,

Convinced that the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action has to be translated into effective action by States, the competent United Nations organs and organizations and other organizations concerned, including non-governmental organizations,

Recognizing the importance of dialogue and cooperation between Governments and non-governmental organizations in the field of human rights,

Noting that the activities envisaged in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action add further to the workload and the responsibilities of the United Nations human rights system and that so far only initial steps have been taken towards bridging the gap between resources and the mandated outputs,

Recalling the request of the Conference to the Secretary-General and the General Assembly to take immediate steps to increase substantially the resources for the human rights programme from within the existing and future regular budgets of the United Nations,

Welcoming the fact that the call of the Conference for a United Nations system-wide approach to human rights issues has been reflected in the recommendations of major international conferences organized by the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields, in particular the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, held at Cairo from 5 to 13 September 1994, 3/ the Copenhagen Declaration on Social

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2/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1994, Supplement No. 4 and corrigendum (E/1994/24 and Corr.1), chap. II, sect. A.

3/ A/CONF.171/13, chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

Development 4/ and the Programme of Action 5/ of the World Summit for Social Development, held at Copenhagen from 6 to 12 March 1995 and the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women, 6/ held at Beijing from 4 to 15 September 1995,

Noting the ongoing efforts to ensure a coordinated follow-up to major international conferences in the economic, social and related fields,

Recognizing that the interdependence of democracy, development and respect for human rights, as stated in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, requires a comprehensive and integrated approach to the promotion and protection of human rights,

Recalling its resolution 48/141 of 20 December 1993, in which it decided to create the post of United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights as the United Nations official with principal responsibility for United Nations human rights activities, including coordination of the human rights promotion and protection activities throughout the United Nations system,

Noting that at the first regular session of 1994 of the Administrative Committee on Coordination, in April 1994, the executive heads of all United Nations agencies discussed the implications of the results of the Conference for their respective programmes and committed themselves to supporting the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in the coordination of the United Nations organs, bodies and the specialized agencies whose activities deal with human rights, as set out in General Assembly resolution 48/141,

Noting also that the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has established a permanent dialogue with the United Nations programmes and agencies whose activities deal with human rights in order to maintain systematic exchanges of information, experience and expertise,

Having considered the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 7/

1. Takes note with appreciation of the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights;

2. Endorses the reaffirmation in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action of the importance of the promotion of universal respect for, and observance and protection of, all human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations;

4/ A/CONF.166/9, chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

5/ Ibid., annex II.

6/ A/CONF.177/20, chap. I, sect. 1.

7/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Fiftieth Session, Supplement No. 36 (A/50/36).

3. Reaffirms the views of the World Conference on Human Rights on the urgency of eliminating denials and violations of human rights;

4. Recognizes that the international community should devise ways and means to remove current obstacles and meet the challenges to the full realization of all human rights and to prevent the continuation of human rights violations resulting therefrom throughout the world;

5. Calls upon all States to take further action with a view to the full realization of all human rights in the light of the recommendations of the Conference;

6. Urges all States to continue to give widespread publicity to the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action in order to promote increased awareness of human rights and fundamental freedoms;

7. Reiterates the request of the Conference that immediate steps be taken to increase substantially the resources for the human rights programme from within existing and future regular budgets of the United Nations;

8. Welcomes with appreciation the work of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights accomplished so far, and expresses its commitment to continue to cooperate with and support the High Commissioner in the discharge of his mandate, as set out in General Assembly resolution 48/141;

9. Requests the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the General Assembly, the Commission on Human Rights and other organs and bodies of the United Nations system related to human rights to take further action with a view to the full implementation of all the recommendations of the Conference;

10. Also requests the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to continue to coordinate the human rights promotion and protection activities throughout the United Nations system, as set out in General Assembly resolution 48/141, including through a permanent dialogue with the United Nations agencies and programmes whose activities deal with human rights;

11. Invites the Administrative Committee on Coordination to continue to discuss the implications of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action for the United Nations system;

12. Requests the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to continue to report on the measures taken and the progress achieved in the comprehensive implementation of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action;

13. Decides to consider this question at its fifty-first session under the sub-item "Comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action".